

# Arts in the Parks

## Clifty Falls State Park Property Profile

**Website:** <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2985.htm>

### Key Messages/Stories:

- Clifty Falls State Park is brimming with geologic splendor, including its narrow valley, sheer cliffs and plunging waterfalls! The park was established in 1920 in order to preserve these natural wonders. Whether you are looking for a relaxing getaway at our Inn or campground, a challenging hike on over 14 miles of scenic trails, a visit to our Nature Center to learn about the parks natural and cultural features, or even a dip in our swimming pool, there is something for everyone at Clifty Falls!
- Cultural History – The citizens of Madison and Jefferson County bought what became the park's 570 original acres to give to fellow Hoosiers as Indiana's third state park in 1920. Back then, the Madison State Hospital grounds stood between Madison and the park. The hospital dropped its farming program in the early 1960s. In 1965, the park acquired much of the former hospital land, nearly doubling in size and becoming the city's next-door neighbor.
- Today's park covers 1,519 acres. In 1852, long before Clifty Falls even became a state park, the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad began work on a route through the wilds of Clifty Canyon. Abandoned in bankruptcy in 1854, the project left extensive grade and stone work along present-day foot trails. The most prominent remnant is a 600 ft. tunnel that visitors can explore between May 1 and October 31. The tunnel is closed to visitors between November 1 and April 30 to provide undisturbed hibernation habitat for several species of bats found in the park.
- Natural Beauty – The park is most known for our beautiful waterfalls along Clifty Creek that can be viewed from several locations along our scenic trails. Clifty Canyon Nature Preserve, a 178 acre nature preserve, lies within the boundaries of the park and contains both ecological and geological highlights. Clifty Falls is also a favorite destination for many visitors to view an abundance of 450 million year old fossils.

### Top Five Things to Do:

- Hike scenic trails
- Visit 4 major waterfalls in the park. (Big Clifty, Little Clifty, Tunnel Falls & Hoffman Falls)
- Explore historic railroad tunnel built in 1852
- Visit the Nature Center and attend a program
- Spend the night at Clifty Inn and/or dine at the Falls Restaurant

**Lodging:** Clifty Inn, Electric & Non-electric campground and Youth Camp Area.

**General visitor profile:** Campers (weekends or weeklong); day-users for picnics and hiking; visiting the nature center; school groups in spring/summer; scout and other groups for volunteer service; people staying in the lodge.



**Potential arts venues:**

- Small Amphitheater located inside our Electric Campground. Outdoor setting (no cover), small stage, no electricity. Wooden bench seating, capacity 50.
- Various shelter houses:
  - Clifty Shelter: Partially enclosed, capacity 75, electricity, modern restroom facilities nearby
  - Poplar Grove: Open shelter, capacity 50, non-electric, vault toilets nearby
  - Cragmont Shelter: Open shelter, capacity 50, non-electric, vault toilets nearby
  - Oak Grove: Open shelter, capacity 50, non-electric, vault toilets nearby
- Nature Center:
  - Open Program Room: It is not a separate room but rather a space inside the Nature Center, capacity 30, modern restroom available inside building, electricity
  - Front Porch: Open porch with roof attached to Nature Center, unlimited capacity (it is an open porch with open grass surrounding it), ability to run extension cords, restrooms inside Nature Center.

**Nearby Communities:** Madison, Versailles, Scottsburg

**Please email questions to [Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov).**

